

UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL  
10 June 1983

Reagan "pretty hostile" to media: Glasser  
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The Reagan administration is restricting the public's access to information through subtle executive orders and a policy of denying visas to foreigners, the head of the American Civil Liberties Union said.

"We are all being allowed to speak and publish and meet. But the information debate requires is being restricted," Ira Glasser, of New York City, told the Indianapolis Press Club Friday.

Glasser said his organization rates President Reagan "very bad" in the category of freedom of speech and information.

Reagan has been "pretty hostile, but pretty clever also," Glasser said. Instead of ordering wiretaps and break-ins, "it's all through executive orders in invisible ways nobody sees."

Glasser said Reagan policy has made it easier to classify government documents -- such as CIA reports -- as confidential and has severely weakened the Freedom of Information Act. An order signed March 11 requires federal officials to sign contracts promising to clear materials they write for publication with the government, even after they leave office.

"What this imposes is basically a lifetime prior restraint on government officials," Glasser said.

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EXCERPT